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are related to the Most High; in our Individual, to the most low; in both consciousnesses, to the All. The soul in its Inmosts is related to the Divine; in its Outmosts, to the outmosts of things. The Personal soul voices all things, from the Most High to the pebble; is pervious to all voices, all harmonies. In this is realized the meeting and reconciliation of extremes, that the soul in its conscious Individuality realizes its differentiation from all other creatures, and, at the same time, in its conscious Personality it is expanded into knowledge of, and alliance with all Forms in Heaven and Earth. We see, then, how small a part of the whole is manifested in our individual consciousness: the Universe cannot sound through us. In this we are allied to the beasts; in our great consciousness, with the world of Intelligible Forms and Entities. There is a Psychic Body and there is a Body Pneumatic. Material corporeality is not philosophically predicable of the nature of man.

THE THEORY OF COGNITION :

ITS IMPORT AND PROBLEM.

Translated from the German of EDWARD ZELLER, by MAX. EBERHARDT.

Logic is the name given, for the past two thousand years, to the entire course of those inquiries which relate to the thinking faculty purely as such, aside from the distinct content of thought. It is to exhibit the forms and laws of thought, without pretending to assert anything concerning the objects cognizable through them. To this Logic of an earlier date is opposed another of a more modern origin, taught by Hegel and his followers. It claims to furnish not only a knowledge of the forms of thought, but also a knowledge of the Real which constitutes the object of thought; it claims that its subject does not simply embrace logic but also metaphysics, and for this reason is known by the name of the Speculative in contradistinction to the ordinary purely Formal logic. In my opinion, this co-ordination of logic and metaphysics, or the ontological part of metaphysics, is improper. It is said, of course, that the form cannot be separated from the substance; mere forms of thought, which may

be applied to any substance equally well, are devoid of truth; the forms of thought can claim objective validity only when the essential properties of Being, which in the shape of objective concepts form the very essence of things, can be known along with them.

This argument, however, is liable to many objections. In the first place, it is always a figure of speech to say that thoughts are the essence of things; for though this essence is an object of our thought, it is not directly thought itself; it is known through thought, but it does not subsist in thought, and is not produced by it. Yet, even aside from this, it follows by no means that the forms of thought, because they are in all instances actually invested with a specific content, cannot become an object of research without this content. We come nearer the truth by saying that it is the problem of a scientific analysis to distinguish the various elements in our representations, to separate that which is involved and blended in the phenomenal, enabling us in this manner to explain the empirical data from their primary elements. In doing this, respecting our thinking consciousness in general,—in considering the general forms of thought by themselves without reference to the particular content, logic is not engaged in anything unreal or untrue. The same objection might be urged against mathematics, because this science investigates the essential properties of numbers without regard to the peculiar qualities of that which forms the subject of calculation—the general relations of an object in space without reference to the physical nature of bodies. But as certain aspects and properties of the Real are in this case taken by themselves as so many subjects of contemplation, formal logic is likewise concerned with something real—with thought as this particular fact in the spiritual life of man; the only qualification being this, that it considers this reality, thought, simply in respect to its form without regard to its content. This separate treatment of the modes of thought is, however, not only proper; it is absolutely essential. For, since the results of every inquiry are dependent upon the method we employ, it is impossible to attempt with anything like a scientific certainty an examination of the Real, in case the conditions and forms of the scientific method we adopt has

not previously been ascertained and established. This forms, however, the very subject of logic. Hence logic must, in the shape of a scientific methodology, precede every empirical investigation of the Real; and this holds good not simply of those branches which concern themselves with the special departments of the Real—Nature and the human mind—but applies with equal force to metaphysics and its most elementary part, to-wit, ontology: this, too, cannot be treated successfully without a previous understanding as to the manner of its treatment,—without, for instance, an antecedent knowledge, whether they are established by an *à priori* or *à posteriori* method, whether by reflection from empirical data or by a dialectical construction. Logic is consequently as little identical with metaphysics as with any other branch of systematized philosophy bearing directly upon a knowledge of the object, but it precedes it. The former has to investigate the most universal determinations of all reality, the latter the forms and laws of human cognition. Yet, how different these two problems are is made evident by the logic of Hegel. By far the greater part of its categories express only determinations of objective Being without any direct reference to the forms of thought; those qualities, on the other hand, which are descriptive of these forms, apply to the objective world in a metaphysical sense. The operations of thought by dint of which we cognize the essence of things are evidently different from that which is known through them; they would be immediately co-ordinated only in case the object were to exist only in thought, or in case it were to leave its impression, absolutely invariable, upon the latter without any aid whatsoever from our own spontaneous activity.

Nevertheless, the fault found with logic, as it was in its earlier stages, for the reason that it was devoid of real foundation, is not without cause, although this foundation is not to be looked for in metaphysics, but in the theory of cognition. It is impossible to establish by a certain view regarding the objective world *that* science which precedes every objective knowledge; but it is certainly possible to base it upon a view respecting the general elements and conditions of the act of cognition whose particular forms it is to de-

scribe, thus establishing at the same time the rules governing their application. Only upon these grounds can logic be successfully defended against the charge of formalism as far as this charge is well founded at all. Logic, of course, is a formal science as well as grammar or pure mathematics; and such it must be, because it treats simply of the general forms of cognition, and not of a specific content. Formalistic, however, it will be only when it uses these forms without understanding their real import, without consequently distinguishing the essential from the unessential. Yet their significance lies in the service they render us in attaining to a knowledge of the Real, and whatever there is in this fact we can only estimate by the relation they sustain to the mind's activity, by which we originally arrive at the idea of the Real. Since this activity of the mind forms, then, the peculiar subject of the Theory of Cognition, it is quite apparent that it is the theory of cognition upon which logic has to fall back if the modes of thought shall be a living element in its operations and lose the appearance of arbitrary formulas.

It is, however, not simply its connection with logic in which we are to find the true meaning of the Philosophical Theory of Cognition. This science rather constitutes the formal groundwork of Philosophy in all its departments; from it must come the final decision as to the right method in Philosophy and in science generally. For, as regards the manner in which we have to proceed in order to secure correct notions, we shall be able to form an opinion only according to the conditions upon which the foundation of our representations, owing to the nature of our mind, depends; these very conditions, however, are to be examined by the theory of cognition which is accordingly to determine whether and by virtue of what hypothesis the human mind is capacitated for the cognition of truth. The necessity of such an inquiry has consequently been urged in philosophy from the time that Socrates put forth the idea of a method which is employed in the manner demanded by a positive conviction as to the nature of human knowledge. But it was not until the last few centuries that its full meaning became apparent and that its subject was more accurately defined. In the founders of modern philosophy, in the minds of Bacon and Descartes, the two

opposite tendencies of scientific thought—that of empiricism and that of rationalism—were already active. Whilst Bacon assumed that all knowledge proceeded from experience, Hobbes endeavored to show more distinctly in what manner our ideas and thoughts arise from sensation, and Locke, openly combatting the theory of innate ideas, proved the subjective and objective experience of man to be the two sources to which the entire content of consciousness had to be traced exclusively. In opposition to him, Leibnitz advocated the Cartesian view of innate ideas, and he was consistent enough to carry this view, in conformity with the postulates of his system, to the point towards which it already had tended unmistakably in the Cartesian school and in the philosophy of Spinoza—to-wit, the assertion that all our representations, without exception, were innate ideas—that all were created within our own minds, and that they of course coincided in time with the external phenomena, but were not directly produced by their action. Leibnitz, however, found at the same time in the distinction between the unconscious and the conscious, between the clear and the confused representations, in the doctrine of the different developmental stages in the sphere of mind, the means of including experience and sensation in this development even, and of explaining the same from his point of view. The Lockean empiricism was further developed by the French philosophers of the eighteenth century into sensationalism and then into materialism; in England, Locke's views gave rise first to Berkeley's idealism and then to David Hume's skepticism, which the Scotch school had virtually no other means of meeting than by appealing to the presumptions and demands of the unphilosophical consciousness. At the same point, however, German philosophy had arrived likewise, after the spiritualism of Leibnitz had been turned into a logical formalism by Wolff, which could find, as a matter of course, its real complement only in experience; and with the French rationalists, and above all with Rousseau, the ultimate standard of truth was equally made up of certain practical convictions, which they took for granted as inevitable corollaries long before entering upon any scientific investigation.

It is Kant's undying merit to have freed philosophy from

this dogmatism; it is he who has not only raised and agitated anew the question concerning the origin and truth of our ideas, but answered it in a more thorough and comprehensive manner than his predecessors. The latter had derived our ideas with a sort of partiality *either* from experience, *or* from the human mind. Kant recognized the fact that they originate from the one source as well as from the other; and he does not assert this in the sense of the eclectic, who would have some of them to be of an empirical, others of an *à priori* origin, but his meaning is this, that there is not a single idea in which both elements are not embraced. All derive their content, as Kant assumes, from sensation, but to all and every one of our ideas, even to those regarding which we seem to be the recipients merely, we are the agents who give them the forms in which they move; our own mind is the power which turns, agreeable to the laws of its own being, the material furnished by sensation into intuitions and concepts. Hence, Kant agrees alike with Empiricism, which claims that all ideas arise from experience, and with Rationalism, which makes them all originate from our ideal self; but he does not concede to either one that its principle is true to the exclusion of that of the other; he knows, in distinguishing the form from the substance of our ideas, how to connect both views, and by this very means to remove the limits which either one seeks to impose upon our understanding; he knows how to comprehend not only part of our ideas but all of them, as being equally the effects of external objects and the products of our self-consciousness.

From these premises Kant has, of course, drawn conclusions which forced German philosophy, in spite of all the grandeur of its development, into a channel leading to one-sided views and not altogether safe in the attainment of truth. If all ideas arise from experience, we cannot form an idea of anything that transcends the domain of possible experience; if our self-activity participates in the production of all ideas,—if a subjective, *à priori* element be attached to them all, they do not represent to our intuition things as they are in themselves, but invariably in the manner they appear to us according to the peculiar nature of our presentative faculty. We perceive everything clothed in the colors of our

own making; and how anything would look different from this, we are absolutely incapable of knowing. It was, above all, this last conclusion from which Kant's successors have started their controversies. "If I cannot know what things are in themselves," says Fichte, "I am likewise incapable of knowing *whether* things are in themselves; to me things exist only in consciousness, and though the ideas we have of things force themselves upon us irresistibly, it does not follow in the least that these ideas originate from without us. The only legitimate conclusion is, that there is something in the nature of our mind which necessarily calls forth the ideas of things external to us, and the problem of philosophy can be no other than to comprehend this whole world alleged to be external to us as a phenomenon of consciousness, as a product of the infinite ego, as a phase of its development." That this is certainly no simple and easy matter, must have become quite evident. Even supposing the contrariety of the ego and non-ego to be at first an abstract notion produced by the infinite ego itself, it is—deny it as you may—present in consciousness; nay, it is a fundamental datum of our consciousness; we are conscious only when perceiving this fact, and cannot abstract from it without abandoning the idea of a conscious and distinct personality. I am but subject whilst distinguishing myself from the object; i I contemplate that which precedes this distinction, I have neither contemplated a subject nor an object, but simply the unity of both, the "subject-object." Fichte even could not deny this, and he therefore distinguished the empirical ego, the subject which is opposed to the object, from the pure or absolute ego which precedes this contrast or opposition, and which is the primordial cause and subject-object alike, these being the forms of its appearance.

"But by what authority," asks Schelling, not without reason, "can this infinite Being still be called 'I'? The ego is this very self-conscious personality, the subject; that which is subject and object alike is for this very reason neither subject nor object; hence it is not ego, it is simply the Absolute as such." Thus Fichte's conception of the absolute ego breaks in two in its very middle: on the one side appears the Absolute, which is neither subject nor object, neither ego

nor non-ego, but only their absolute identity and indifference; on the other side we see Being—arriving at it by way of inference—in the two principal forms of object and subject, of Nature and Mind: it is the business of philosophy to adjust these two elements through the medium of thought, to construe the Derivative by the Original, Nature and Mind by the Absolute.

Ingeniously but with a defective method, with a restless change of system and terminology, Schelling attempted the solution of this problem; Hegel undertook to do the same, through the patient toil of thought, with systematic rigor and completeness. If the absolute Entity manifest itself in Nature and Mind, the necessity of this manifestation must lie in itself; it must belong to the totality of its own being. Hence, Nature and Mind must be phenomenal forms essential to the Absolute, indispensable momenta of its eternal life, and the Absolute itself must be the Entity which is moving through the contrarieties of the finite, developing itself through Nature into Mind—the Absolute Spirit. Furthermore, this manifestation must be throughout determined by law by an inherent necessity, for making its activity and existence a matter of chance would militate against the concept of the Absolute. This manifestation being thus determined, it must also be possible to cognize it in its universal conformity to law—to comprehend the world as being born from the Absolute, provided we can find the formula according to which this process takes place. This formula, as far as it is concerned, where could it lie but in the law of development in and through contraries? As the absolute Being must first enter the form of natural existence, of finitude and externality, in order to apprehend itself as mind, every species of development is subject to the same law: whatever is developing must first change from its former state into another in order to return from the latter to itself, and to realize itself by means of self-abnegation. It is the reproduction of this process in thought wherein the dialectical method consists; and by continually applying this dialectical method we must succeed in reproducing in a scientific manner the evolution of the Absolute, the gradatory series of beings as they originate out of the Deity. These are the

most essential ideas which Hegel has followed out in his attempt at a dialectical construction of the universe.

Though we may pay the highest tribute of admiration to the greatness of this attempt,—though we may with perfect freedom acknowledge whatever is true and legitimate in it,—though we may be profoundly convinced of its results, so fruitful in many respects,—we can never fail to perceive, upon an impartial examination, that he has not attained the object upon which his efforts were directed, and that he could not attain it because he loses sight of the conditions of human cognition,—because he wishes to seize with but a single touch from above the ideal of knowledge, which we in reality can approach but gradually from below through the most complicated of intellectual efforts. Yet it is equally apparent that the system of Hegel in all its leading aspects, and especially his dialectico-constructive method, is but the result of the previous development of philosophy, the perfection of that idealism which arose with the most perfect logical sequence from Kant's critique of the faculty of cognition. That, therefore, this system should have exercised for a long time a powerful and controlling influence upon German philosophy is quite natural from a historical point of view, and, though it may not permanently gratify the demands of philosophical thought, its magic spell will not be broken before the fundamental principles which he holds in common with his predecessors are examined over again, and more thoroughly than it has yet been done.

That, for instance, the attempts hitherto made to improve upon Hegel's system, or to displace it by a new one, are indeed highly instructive and furnish many a new and correct observation, but are still far from actually solving the problem, I can here state as a matter of conviction only, without proving it by a closer examination of what has been attempted in this direction. It is equally out of place here for me to mention the principal considerations which induce me to withhold my assent from Herbart's theory, though I freely acknowledge the sagacity with which he carried on his polemics, which in point of time fell in with Hegel's, and which were directed not only against this philosopher, but against the whole tendency of modern German philosophy.

But it hardly requires this critical investigation, highly desirable in itself, in order to put into clear light the conviction we have announced above, which points out the necessity of again entering upon an examination of the premises from which German philosophy has started out since Kant. The present state of this science in Germany is ample proof that it has reached one of those turning-points which lead under the most favorable circumstances to a reconstruction upon a new basis, and under the most adverse conditions to decline and dissolution. In place of those grand and coherent systems which for half a century controlled in rapid succession the philosophy of Germany, philosophical thought presents itself at this moment in an unmistakably languid and unsettled condition, in consequence of which the most meritorious efforts are curbed, the most acute and ingenious inquiries are paralyzed, as far as they bear upon the general scope of philosophic thought; and in the same manner the true relation of philosophy to the special sciences has, with but one exception, been lost sight of to such an extent that philosophy is indeed now more disposed than it was a few decades ago to accept their teachings, whilst the special sciences, on the other hand, have entertained a prejudice against philosophy, as though they were not in need of her assistance, but rather retarded by her, in working out their problems. That this shows no sound condition of things need not be proven. But, upon inquiring how this condition of things can be remedied, we are reminded of the remark made by that ingenious Italian statesman who claims that nations and their governments have to return from time to time to first principles. What holds good of nations and their governments, applies with equal force to every living subject of history. Wherever there is an organic state of development in the world of intellect, there at certain times the necessity is manifested to return to the point from whence it started, to call to mind the original problem, and to essay, though perhaps in a different manner, its solution over again in the spirit in which it was first conceived. Such a time, as far as German philosophy is concerned, seems to have come just now. The origin of this development, however, in which our present philosophy is engaged must be traced back to Kant; and the scientific

achievement by means of which Kant assigned a new path to philosophy is his Theory of Cognition. To the investigation of this subject, first of all, every one who intends to rectify the fundamental principles of philosophy must go back, and, enlightened by present experience, again examine, in the spirit which prevails in Kant's Critique, the questions he raised, in order to avoid the mistakes into which Kant had fallen.

It will be one of the most important objects of this course of lectures to point out the results attainable in this direction, but, the present one being a preliminary discussion merely, we can touch but slightly upon these results without applying the method of a more exact scientific demonstration. The first question is as to the sources from whence our representations flow. The statement made by Kant in this respect I must in the main acknowledge as correct. I cannot admit that in the content of our representations regarding the Real there is anything that does not, directly or indirectly, originate from experience, be it external or internal; for, how could the soul get at this content? and how could we, were we to admit that experience has no part in making up the content of our representations, account for the fact, that, upon all our representations, without exception, if we look at this subject more closely, are impressed the traces of the manifold experiences from whence they originate; and that, on the other hand, we have also no concept whatever of things regarding which we have no experience? What proof, finally, have we regarding the reality of anything, the idea of which, as you suppose, is purely formed by us, and not called forth by the effect an object produces within us? Yet, on the other hand, Kant is perfectly right in denying that any representation is brought about in any other way than by means of our self-activity, and in the forms prescribed by the nature of our cognitive faculty.

What is directly presented to us in experience are always the particular impressions, these particular feelings, as acts of consciousness. The manner even in which we receive the effect of things, the quality and amount of sensation which the effect produces within us, are conditioned by the nature of our sensuous organs and the laws of our perceptive faculty.

Our own activity comes into play in a more obvious manner, if we unite the particular feelings into so many collective images; if we externalize, i.e. place without us, that which is at first given in our consciousness, and contemplate it as an object; if we proceed, by way of abstraction, from perceptions to general concepts; if we reason from the facts of experience to the causes underlying them. It is, of course, not true that in sensation, as Kant says, a merely inferior material is represented to us, and that all forms originate solely within us; for the external impressions must, as these particular ones, necessarily be given in a distinct form and order. But, as the conceptions and combination of what is there given are still determined by the nature of our faculty of intuition, the truth of Kant's statements will not materially be affected by his mistake in regard to the content of our sensations. The essential principle is still this, that all our representations are, without exception and at all stages of their development, the united efflux from two sources—the objective impression and the subjective faculty of representation.

But the question as to the manner in which these two elements work together in producing our representations, and what are the *a priori* laws controlling our presentative faculty, cannot be discussed before we have proceeded farther in our inquiry. Yet, however candidly we must acknowledge that there is in all our representations a subjective element; that the objects are represented to us only in the manner in which the innate form of perception and thinking will have it,—it is impossible for us to escape the question concerning the truth of the representations we secure in this manner. Although there may be at the bottom of our representations something truly objective, how is it possible to cognize this objective something in its pure form, that in which things are *per se*, if the objects are still presented to us in the subjective forms of representation only?

Kant replies that it is impossible; and this impossibility seems so evident to him, that he considers no further proof of it at all necessary. Yet in this the main error of the Kantian Critique lies, the ominous step towards that idealism which all at once was to be developed to the extreme in the philo-

sophy of Uichte. We conceive objects but in the subjective forms of representation, but does it hence follow that we do not conceive them as they are *per se*?

May we not conceive the case to be quite different, namely, that the forms of Representation are, from their very nature, constituted so as to furnish us a correct view of the things without? Indeed, must not this at once impress us with a far greater degree of probability if we consider that in Nature it is the *one* grand totality that encompasses the objects and our own selves—one order, from which the objective phenomena and our representations of these phenomena spring? Or, to look the matter right in the face: experience, of course, gives us in the first place nothing but phenomena, acts of our consciousness, in which the external impressions and the effects of our own presentative faculty are blended without distinction. It is impossible to distinguish both elements with certainty so long as we take any particular phenomenon for itself, since this phenomenon is presented to us only as this very unity of the elements mentioned, and since under none of its aspects the effect of the object enters in a manner different from the subjective form of representation, and this form of representation otherwise than with this definite content, into our consciousness. But what we cannot accomplish by the apprehension of a particular phenomenon as such, may be effected by a comparison of many. If we see how the most discrete objects are apprehended in the same forms of Representation,—how, in turn, the same object may be represented in the most different ways and from the most unlike points of view; if we find that not only the different senses, but also perception and thought, do, in certain respects, assert the same thing about the same subject; if we find that, on the other hand, a number of the most different perceptions force themselves upon the same sense, and if we are careful to observe the conditions under which the one or the other of these cases takes place,—we shall be enabled to ascertain what, in the range of our experience, proceeds from the objects and what proceeds from the mind, and how the latter is related to the former, we shall be enabled to ascertain the objective process and qualities of things, and, farther on, the causes as well, upon which they depend.

If, however, pure observation is apt to fail in this respect, or is not entirely trustworthy, another course is left to us for the purpose of testing and amplifying the results of observation, the same one which natural science has long ago followed with the greatest success. As we proceed by induction from phenomena to the causes which underlie them, we test in like manner the correctness of our suppositions respecting the causes by the standard of actual phenomena. We determine by way of deduction, and, where it is possible, by way of calculation, what phenomena must result from certain premises regarding the nature of things and their efficient causes; if it follow that these phenomena do indeed happen not only in particular instances but regularly, then the correctness of our premises is established; if the contrary takes place, then the necessity of correcting what we have assumed regarding the nature of things is urged upon us. The most frequent and fruitful application of this method is to be met with in case we produce the phenomena by some means of our own in accordance with our presuppositions; in other words, in case we can control our hypothesis by experiments. How unfailing and effectual the results are that can be secured, even where we cannot exercise this control, is shown by the brilliant achievements of astronomy, which has attained its present perfection through this method. Although we consequently cannot obtain a perspective view by means of our theory of cognition upon that absolute knowledge which is claimed by some of the philosophical systems subsequent to Kant's, it still justifies the hope that a persistent and thoughtful inquiry may succeed in approaching, by way of gradual progression, this ideal, in rendering our knowledge of the world and its laws in proportion to its growth more and more certain.

The principal conclusions we may draw from these considerations regarding the form and method of philosophy, I shall briefly point out before closing. Whoever assumes that knowledge is innate and born with the mind of man,—that it develops itself at the furthest *by means* of experience, and does not originate directly from experience, will logically be bound to derive all truth from the ideas that dwell within us, and which on their part can be formed only

by pure thought and an abstract self-contemplation. To him the only true philosophical method will be an *à priori* construction such as has been applied by Fichte, and with the most complete mastery by Hegel.

He, on the other hand, who holds all our ideas to be simply the product of perception, of impressions caused by objects, would have to rely solely upon observation, distrusting the conclusions we draw from observations and the concepts we abstract from them in proportion as they differ from that which is an object of immediate perception. Being convinced, however, that all our ideas are the common product of objective impressions and the subjective activity by which we work up these impressions, we no longer consider it essential to recognize anything given, whether furnished from without or within, as an ultimatum, as an absolute certainty, and to deduce as from this *primordial* substance all that is left; but all that is given we hold, in the first place, to be but a phenomenon of consciousness whose objective grounds we have to examine first, and from which general propositions and concepts can be obtained only by an intellectual process very complicated in its nature.

In a word, our stand-point is not that of dogmatism, whether it be empirical or speculative, but that of criticism. We cannot expect to attain to a knowledge of the Real in any other way than by proceeding from experience; yet we do not forget that there are in experience itself *à priori* elements from the beginning, and that we arrive at the positive data in their purity only after eliminating these elements, and that the general laws and the recondite principles of things are not at all cognized by experience but by thought. Hence, though the most possible, exact, and complete observation is the first step towards knowledge, we still have to proceed two steps farther in case we desire to arrive at positive knowledge. The first consists in discerning the different elements in our experience, and it embraces all the operations whose function is to exhibit the objective matter of fact, freed from subjective ingredients.

The actual phenomena being thus established, the next step is to find out their causes, in order to explain the former by these fundamental principles, and in order to arrive at

the concept of their essence genetically. The method, however, which we have to employ here; the significance which, on the one hand, the inductive, and, on the other hand, the deductive process may claim; the more minute modifications to which both are subject when actually applied; the necessity and the manner of their joint application,—all this forms the subject of Logic when treating of the science of Method.

GOETHE'S TITANISM.

Translated from the German of KARL ROSENKRANZ, by ANNA C. BRACKETT.

I.—*Origin of Faust—Sketch of Mahomet and the Wandering Jew.*

In the Greek mythology the Titans were the sons of Earth, who attempted to take heaven by storm. The expression "Titanism" may be used to denote the struggle of man with God for sovereignty. The infinite significance of this Idealism arose in Goethe out of the abysses of the Nature-worship in *Werther*, and the fullness of his culture, the wonderful consistency of his creative power, so wrought in him that he followed out this struggle through all the principal forms of the historical consciousness of man; and not from a premeditated design, but because the Idea itself led him on from one phase to another. Christianity, Islamism, Judaism, and Ethnicism, one after the other, challenged his genius. Faust, Mahomet, Ahasuerus, and Prometheus, are Goethe's Titanic figures: they are the human Titans.

However superfluous may be the inquiry as to the chronological date of the conception of this theme, because in the mind of a creative genius it must have continuously moved, nevertheless this is known, that the story of *Faust* had already possessed Goethe's imagination in Strasburg, where he prevented Herder from using it. There must have been a rumor that he thought of working at it at that time, for a bookseller, who offered him twenty thalers for *Stella*, said that for *Faust* he would give him more. The idea of *Mahomet* came to him during a journey on the Rhine which he made with Lavater and Basedow, as he observed how the